



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

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# News Release

## **OAKHURST MAN CHARGED WITH USING INTERNET TO SOLICIT SEXUAL ENCOUNTERS WITH 12-YEAR-OLD GIRL**

FRESNO, Calif. – A 22-year-old Oakhurst man who used the Internet to coerce what he thought was a 12-year-old girl into engaging in various forms of sexual activity made his initial appearance in federal court here this morning.

Timothy J. Myers was arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents yesterday afternoon at a North Fork pizza restaurant when he arrived to meet what he believed was a 12-year-old girl he had met in an Internet chat room. Myers' arrest followed a week-long investigation by ICE and the Fresno County Sheriff's Department. The investigation was sparked by a tip from the Madera County Sheriff's Department, which also aided in the arrest.

“Those who sexually exploit children should no longer expect the anonymity of cyberspace to protect them,” said Scott Brown, Fresno ICE resident agent-in-charge. “ICE is committed to working closely with our local law enforcement partners to combat this heinous behavior that threatens our community's most innocent and vulnerable members.”

During the investigation, ICE agents documented Myers' visits to chat rooms, where he made advances and detailed sexual demands to a chat partner who identified herself as a 12-year old girl. During those conversations, Myers repeatedly expressed his desire to meet the girl in person, graphically describing potential sexual scenarios.

At the time of his arrest, ICE agents found a variety of sexual aids in Myers' possession. In a subsequent search of his residence, agents seized two computer hard drives, a Web camera, and various storage media.

Myers is charged with using the Internet to knowingly induce or coerce a minor to engage in sexual activity. If convicted, he faces a maximum sentence of 30 years in prison.

Myer's arrest is part of Operation Predator, a nationwide ICE initiative to protect children from sexual predators, including those who travel overseas for sex with minors, Internet child pornographers, criminal alien sex offenders, and child sex traffickers. Since Operation Predator was launched in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 4,900 individuals, including nearly 1,400 in California.

ICE encourages the reporting of suspected child predators and any suspicious activity through its toll-free hotline at 1-866-DHS-2ICE. This hotline is staffed around the clock by investigators.

Suspected child sexual exploitation or missing children may be reported to the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children, an Operation Predator partner, at 1-800-843-5678 or <http://www.cybertipline.com>.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*